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2019

### 2019 Faculty Summer Seminar - Ethics & Our Disciplines

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# CENTER FOR CATHOLIC STUDIES

## 2019 Faculty Summer Seminar



### ETHICS & OUR DISCIPLINES

*Co-sponsored by the*  
**CENTER FOR VOCATION & SERVANT LEADERSHIP**

*With support of the*  
**THE TOTH/LONERGAN ENDOWED CHAIR  
IN INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES**

**May 28-30, 2019**



CENTER FOR  
CATHOLIC STUDIES

SETON HALL UNIVERSITY

## 2019 FACULTY SUMMER SEMINAR

CO-SPONSORED BY THE CENTER FOR VOCATION AND SERVANT LEADERSHIP  
WITH SUPPORT OF THE TOTH/LONERGAN ENDOWED CHAIR IN INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

MAY 28, 29, 30 • 9:30 AM-12:30 PM

### LOCATION



ABOUT THE FACILITATOR

**Patrick Byrne** is Professor of Philosophy at Boston College. He recently published *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan's Foundations for Ethics* (University of Toronto Press: 2018). His teaching and research interests include the relationships between ethics, science, evolution, religion, service learning, and social justice, and the thought of Bernard Lonergan, Aristotle, and Albert Einstein.

## ETHICS & OUR DISCIPLINES

University disciplines and professional codes of ethics can feel so abstract. Is there some good that we are trying to achieve together, perhaps without realizing it? How do we bring our human hearts and intelligences into those codes to give them life? The theme of this workshop will be an approach to ethics that place practices of “discernment” at its center. Each participant will be encouraged to see how discernment can enrich their own specialized work, and facilitate cooperative ventures with others.

Since 1998, the Center for Catholic Studies has provided the opportunity for faculty to reflect in depth on topics central to the Catholic intellectual tradition. This seminar is open to all administrators and faculty. Faculty participants who write a short response-essay will receive a stipend of \$300. These essays will be collected and made available online at <http://scholarship.shu.edu/>

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## ABOUT THE CENTER FOR VOCATION AND SERVANT LEADERSHIP

The Center for Vocation and Servant Leadership promotes openness to God's call in both the academic life and common life of Seton Hall University to support the overall mission of forming students as servant leaders for today's world. The Center began in 2003 supported by a generous grant from Lilly Endowment to further their goal of preparing the next generation of Church leadership. The Center for Vocation and Servant Leadership does its work in cooperation with other campus organizations and by sponsoring several different programs including faculty development, scholarships, and retreats for faculty and administrators. The mission of Seton Hall University reflects a faith in God who knows us individually and has a personal plan for our life. The call to our vocation is not a demand but an invitation to join God in something meant for our doing. A generous response to our vocation – like the choice at a fork in the road -- can make all the difference. For more information visit: <https://www.shu.edu/vocation-servant-leadership/>

## ABOUT THE CENTER FOR CATHOLIC STUDIES

Founded at Seton Hall University in 1997, The Center for Catholic Studies ([www.shu.edu/go/ccs](http://www.shu.edu/go/ccs)) is dedicated to fostering a dialogue between the Catholic intellectual tradition and all areas of study and contemporary culture, through scholarly research and publications and ongoing programs for faculty, students, and the general public. In 2001, the Center conducted the annual faculty summer seminar, "The Core of the Core," which originated the present University Core Curriculum. The Center also developed the undergraduate degree program in Catholic Studies with its major, minor and certificate, which in 2012 became the **Department of Catholic Studies** ([www.shu.edu/go/dcs](http://www.shu.edu/go/dcs)). The Center continues to support the Department with scholarship aid and its ongoing program of co-curricular activities. Focusing on the central role of the faculty, the Center is the sponsor of regular **Faculty Development** programs, including lectures, seminars and retreats. The Center also administers two national faculty development programs: *Collegium: A Colloquy on Faith and Intellectual Life*, and *The Lilly Fellows Program*. The Center has also helped to establish the Toth/Lonergan Endowed Chair in Interdisciplinary Studies to bring exceptional scholars and outstanding contemporary thinkers to the university to encourage interdisciplinary dialogue and studies. The Center maintains a global focus in international scholarship and is the home of the **G.K. Chesterton Institute for Faith & Culture**, as well as the **Bernard J. Lonergan Institute**. The Institutes offer opportunities for study and research, as well as ongoing programs related to faith and culture. In addition, the **Micah Institute for Business and Economics** concentrates on communicating Catholic Social Teaching and ethics to business education at Seton Hall and the wider business community. The Center also publishes the prestigious *Chesterton Review* and *The Lonergan Review*.

**CENTER FOR CATHOLIC STUDIES**

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*Director, Center for Catholic Studies*

CENTER FOR CATHOLIC STUDIES

2019 Faculty Summer Seminar

**ETHICS & OUR DISCIPLINES**

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## **The Ethics of Teaching Ethics to Undergraduates: A Librarian's Perspective**

Beth Bloom

Seton Hall University Librarians work with university students at all degrees of sophistication and levels of maturity. Necessarily, the older and more experienced students demonstrate more self-knowledge and a commitment to learning and academic achievement than our nascent incoming freshmen. Thus, we are led to question whether it is ethical for us to teach ethics to freshmen. Are they age-ready to understand the concepts? To what extent should we approach the issue? According to Patrick H. Byrne, the Goal of ethics in education is to allow students to make the transition from ingesting all given information into deciding what is true for themselves.<sup>1</sup>

This task is challenging, to say the least. Freshmen are at an age where they are transitioning from their home to the dorm and from the familiarity of their high school to university life. Although part of the excellent University Life experience, they must learn how to function without parental supervision. They also must learn to think without parental influence. At this juncture, students must rely on themselves to determine what is true, what is good, what they believe, and how do they know.

At all times, librarians observe student behavior during our instruction sessions. We question both our ability to engage them as well as their indicated ability to understand their own research process by the end of each class. We work with freshmen at least three times during the academic year—an introduction to the library with University Life students, followed by library instruction for both English 1201 and 1202. Our first exposure to Freshman, University Life students includes a brief introduction to the library home page, followed by a tour of the building and an exercise necessitating their locating a book in the stacks. We note that the students tend to be wary during the initial encounter with the librarian in these classes. The students seem overwhelmed by the new library, and many tend to withdraw to the rear of the group during the library tour. However, we observe a perceptible change in demeanor and attitude about the library each time they successfully complete their book-search exercise. The students appear to be much more enthusiastic and comfortable both in the library and with the librarians. At this juncture, can librarians build upon this developing trust between themselves and their students to introduce ethics concepts in their next encounter with freshmen?

The emergent issue of student ethical behavior and critical understanding occurs during Freshman English 1201 library instruction, which includes a research component that often involves critical exploration of a controversial topic. Here, students are asked to create an argument to support their belief about any matter of their choice. A common issue that arises during the initial library instruction is that many students haven't chosen or thought about their topics; they don't know which to choose, or what their thesis may be. Many students need help finding a topic that they feel is appropriate, and we are there to help them with this.



But an essential issue arises. Once students start their assignment, we see that they miss the point of research. Often the students base their thesis on their feeling about a given situation before doing research to support or abandon it. They rush to find information that will support a preconceived thesis rather than take time to think. We need to help students become comfortable with their own creativity and need to know.

What appears to be missing is their self-appropriation, the ability to think critically and therefore ethically. They often don't understand the importance of inquiry, which leads to exploration, hence to insight...the initiation of self-knowledge. This deficit may be attributed to the anxiety or fear about poor performance. To paraphrase Pat Byrne: [our students] need to value the practice of not staking out positions. They need to value moments of insight—to experiment with the process of inquiry. We faculty need to understand that “the issue is not only to teach our students to ask questions but also notice that they are ignoring further questions.”<sup>2</sup>

Library faculty can use this initial argument essay as a vital segue into helping students make judgments about controversial issues—better yet, about the effect of these issues on their sense of value and justice. Following Lonergan, Byrne posits that all humans possess a sense of wonder—the need to know: “the pure desire to know.... grounds the intellectual pattern of experience and sets the standards for one's morality.”<sup>3</sup> Helping students understand this is a daunting process. We must allow students to trust their own confusion, not only about how they feel about a topic, but also how to go about researching it and proving their thesis. We must help them understand that confusion and uncertainty are necessary before clarity can be attained.

Another challenge faculty face is students' tendency to be more concerned with finding immediate solutions to a problem, or the “commonsense preference for immediate outcomes to incomplete development of insights and actions,”<sup>4</sup> than honoring their own capacity for inquiry. There are several ways we can help with this: encourage reflection so that students may be open to insights; help them understand that insight is the first step in solving a problem; that they must be able to justify their positions and resolve further nagging questions about their thesis; and discuss how their biases or fears may interfere with insights. This is an important step in helping the process of self-appropriation. Indeed, according to Lonergan, education must allow students to go through this period in order to become their own masters.<sup>5</sup>

Similarly, to the initial success students feel when they find the right book in the university life orientation, we trust that they will also value their own authentic approach to solving a research problem. There is no substitution for the look in a student's face when he or she is satisfied with these results.

Can we instill ethics in freshman library orientations? If ethical behaviors represent the good, it would seem so. According to Lonergan, “not only is what is sought is good, but also the seeking, the capacity to seek, the skills that go into the process of fulfilment and the fulfilment itself are good.”<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Byrne, P., Lecture provided during Catholic Studies Summer Seminar, May 27-30, 2019.

<sup>2</sup> Byrne, P., Lecture provided during Catholic Studies Summer Seminar, May 27-30, 2019.

<sup>3</sup> Lonergan, B., *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan: Volume 10, Topics in Education*, Robert M. Doran and Frederick E. Crowe, eds., (University of Toronto Press: Toronto, 1993), p. 92.

<sup>4</sup> Byrne, P., Lecture provided during Catholic Studies Summer Seminar, May 27-30, 2019.

<sup>5</sup> Lonergan, B., *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan: Volume 10, Topics in Education*. Robert M. Doran and Frederick E. Crowe, eds., (University of Toronto Press: Toronto, 1993), p. 101.

<sup>6</sup> Lonergan, B., *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan: Volume 10, Topics in Education*, Robert M. Doran and Frederick E. Crowe, eds. (University of Toronto Press: Toronto, 1993), p. 28.

## **A Consideration of Ethics in Nursing Education and Healthcare**

Maureen Byrnes

A consideration of nursing ethics is foundational within undergraduate nursing education. In fact, a formal study of nursing ethics is presented to all nursing students within their very first nursing course. Nursing ethics provide a firm foundation upon which the cognitional precepts and requirements of providing safe and effective care to patients are placed and so nursing ethics are quite relevant to the undergraduate nursing student's full formation as a professional nurse.

According to the American Nurses Association (2015a the ethical principles that nurses),<sup>1</sup> must adhere to are the principles of justice, beneficence, nonmaleficence, accountability, fidelity, autonomy, and veracity. Nurses are consistently ranked the nation's most trusted profession. In fact, Gallup's 2019 poll assessing ethics and honesty, nurses were again ranked the most-trusted profession in the United States for the 20th year, with 84% of respondents rating nurses "very high" for honesty and ethical standards, outranking physicians, clergy, police officers, and educators.<sup>2</sup> Nursing students begin to understand the importance of their protecting the health and wellbeing of their patients within their future practice, in which ethical guidelines must be discerned and applied.

Competing values and interests, at the bedside and within the larger healthcare system, will be present during each and every shift. Ethics can be seen as an "extra" or something separate from the care nurses provide patients, but nurses need to be competent and explicit in the ways they think and address ethical issues. So how we get there?

The ethical scenarios may vary, based upon the area of work the nurse is engaged in, yet the approach to solving them can be supported by considering Bernard Lonergan's work on discernment and self-appropriation as it relates to the larger topic of ethics. Dr. Patrick Byrne's most recent faculty seminar provided me with expanded insights for our discussion of what Bernard Lonergan refers to as "The Structure of the Human Good."<sup>3</sup> The human good, as described by Lonergan, is at the same time both "individual" and "social". A description of the way the two aspects combine was offered within Lonergan aligning eighteen terms regarding (1) individuals in their potentialities and actuations, (2) cooperating groups, and (3) ends. Firstly, Lonergan aligns four terms: capacity, operation, particular good, and need, regarding individual good from the perspective of "potentiality and actuation."<sup>4</sup> Lonergan outlines for the reader how by operating, an individual acquires a particular good that meets the need of a particular individual at a given place and time, and includes wants of every kind. Secondly, Lonergan aligns the notion of cooperating groups as "social good" with the terms: cooperation, institution, role and task, all of which relate to ethics in nursing and healthcare. As Lonergan notes, "To a notable extent their operating is cooperating. It follows some settled pattern, and this pattern is fixed by a role to be fulfilled or a task to be performed within an institutional frame-work."<sup>5</sup> Thirdly, Lonergan discussed the capacities of individuals for the performance of operations demanded by institutional roles and tasks, which is also reflected within nursing and healthcare ethics.

The concrete manner in which this cooperation is working out, is what Lonergan means by “the good of order.”<sup>6</sup> I believe Lonergan’s “good of order” is an appropriate application of guiding relationships within nursing and healthcare settings. The functioning or malfunctioning of healthcare relationships, as it meets each new emergency and struggles against every tendency to disorder<sup>7</sup> is applicable and mundane in additionally considering the business of healthcare and the exploitation of nurses and healthcare providers.

Byrne discusses the importance of Lonergan’s application of “self-appropriation” and “objectivity” within the fuller topic of ethics, in his recent book “The Ethics of Discernment.” The correlations between objects that appear to consciousness and the diverse activities of consciousness lead me to consider “what is [a nurse/nursing student] doing when [they are] knowing” and “why is doing that knowing”<sup>8</sup> as it relates to ethics within their work in healthcare settings. Byrne proposes that “doing that” reflects a process of self-transcending, leading to judgments that affirm what is. When a nurse makes an ethical decision, they do that because they “know what is” required ethically, thereby simply moving through answering Lonergan’s third question: What do I know when I do that?<sup>9</sup> Lonergan proposes that ‘reality’ is what we know when we faithfully follow the path of our questions. My simple nursing perspective supports Byrne’s notion of reasonable [nursing] judgment supporting a [nurses] ultimate movement toward the good.

How should nurses respond when there are so many instances of limited healthcare resources in our country? How do we decide how the uninsured are going to receive proper healthcare? How do we refuse to work a double shift when we know we are too tired? How do we create fair and equitable access to basic health care when a healthcare insurance company ‘denies’ medical care that is required and covered by the patient’s health insurance? Could the business of healthcare actually be exploiting ethics within the healthcare setting for their own benefit? A recent *New York Times* article proposes that manipulating ethical healthcare practitioner behavior is profitable as a business practice. The one healthcare resource that seems endless and free, is the ethics of its providers.<sup>10</sup>

As nurses, we must be able to recognize and name ethical issues, begin to understand them, and then reason through them in a discerning manner. We develop a greater understanding of factual nursing knowledge by considering Lonergan’s three questions, regarding nursing and healthcare ethics: (1) What am I doing when I am knowing a nursing choice is ethical? (2) Why is doing that knowing nursing ethics? and (3) What do I know when I perform ethically as a nurse?<sup>11</sup> How we have come to know what we know as nurses, we haven’t yet considered. As a result of considering these questions we are better able to hold ourselves accountable to uphold the nursing Code of Ethics and standards that are true to the profession, while also upholding what is best about healthcare in America.

The question is not whether nurses will encounter difficult ethical situations in healthcare, but rather how they will respond when they encounter them. Ethics is addressed within all nursing courses at Seton Hall University and supported as our students transition into the profession. Nurses are “the most trusted profession,” because of their preparation in applying ethical behavior throughout their nursing education. Becoming well-grounded in applying ethical

values and principles is a required component of nursing education and the hallmark of compassionate and respectful care to all patients, across all healthcare settings.

<sup>1</sup> American Nurses Association (ANA): *Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretative Statement*, Washington, DC, 2015a, American Nurses Publishing.

<sup>2</sup> <https://news.gallup.com/poll/245597/nurses-again-outpace-professions-honesty-ethics.aspx>

<sup>3</sup> Lonergan, B., *Method in Theology*, (University of Toronto Press: Toronto, 1971), p. 47.

<sup>4</sup> Lonergan, B., *Method in Theology*, (University of Toronto Press: Toronto, 1971), p. 48.

<sup>5</sup> Lonergan, B., *Method in Theology*, (University of Toronto Press: Toronto, 1971), p. 48.

<sup>6</sup> Lonergan, B., *Method in Theology*, (University of Toronto Press: Toronto, 1971), p. 49.

<sup>7</sup> Lonergan, B., *Method in Theology*, (University of Toronto Press: Toronto), 1971, p. 50.

<sup>8</sup> Byrne, P. H., *The Ethics of Discernment*, (University of Toronto Press: Toronto), 2016, p. 67.

<sup>9</sup> Byrne, P. H., *The Ethics of Discernment*, (University of Toronto Press: Toronto), 2016, p. 68.

<sup>10</sup> Ofri, D., "The Business of Health Care Depends on Exploiting Doctors and Nurses," *The New York Times*, June 9, 2019.

<sup>11</sup> Byrne, P. H., *The Ethics of Discernment*, (University of Toronto Press: Toronto, 2016), pp. 41-68.

## **The Code of Ethics for the Nursing Profession**

Josephine Devito

The origins of the Code of Ethics for Nurses goes back to the late 1800's in the foundation of the American Nurses Association (ANA), the early ethics literature of modern nursing, and the first nursing code of ethics, which was adopted by the ANA in 1950. In the years since the adoption of the first professional ethics code, nursing has developed as an art, science, and practice. The changes in society and an awareness of the nature and determinants of global health have provided nursing with a leadership aspiration through competitive educational degrees and advanced practice roles in the interprofessional (IP) health care setting.

The ANA establishes and maintains a code of ethics that serves nurses in the United States in all settings and professional roles. The purpose of the Code of Ethics for Nursing is the following:<sup>1</sup>

1. It is a succinct statement of the ethical values, obligations, duties, and professional ideals of nurses individually and collectively.
2. It is the profession's non-negotiable ethical standard.
3. It is an expression of nursing's own understanding of its commitment to society.

The Code of Ethics includes statements that express an ethical obligation to meet these professional behaviors. Society recognizes that nurses serve those seeking health as well as those responding to illness. Nurses have a solid education in physical and psychosocial sciences, and humanities. Nurses educate students, staff, and are a part of the IP health care team.

There is a distinction between ethics and morality. Morality refers to personal values, character, or conduct of individuals or groups within communities.<sup>2</sup> Each person had their own personal beliefs about what is right and what is wrong. Morals are influenced by culture, religion, family relationships, and in some cases world views. Ethics refers to the formal study of that morality from a wide range of perspectives. It is a branch of philosophy or theology in which one reflects on morality and can be referred to as, moral philosophy or moral theology.<sup>3</sup>

Lonergan refers to discernment as the fundamental importance to ethical thinking and living.<sup>4</sup> Self-appropriation is a form of discernment. Self-appropriation can be seen as nurses are educated and they begin to "coming to know what is to know, value and decide for oneself. It continues to affirm the value of one's own knowing, valuing, and deciding. Self-appropriation reaches its culmination in freely choosing to live in fidelity to that value.<sup>5</sup> During nursing education, students begin to experience a self-awareness about what they are learning, it becomes challenging, as they are expanding their horizons into developing their philosophy of nursing. Self-understanding, self-appreciation, and self-awareness add to a conversion. Self-appropriation fosters a conversion toward living in fidelity with the value of authentically being a knower, valuer, and decider.<sup>6</sup> Self-appropriation adds "something extra" an intensified awareness, better understanding, deeper appreciation, and strengthening commitment to the performance of what is best in the role that students have to engage in the practice of nursing.

**The following are the Code of Ethics for Professional Nurses:<sup>7</sup>**

*Provision 1:* The nurse practices with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth, and unique attributes of every person.

1. Respect for Human Dignity
2. Relationships with Patients
3. The Nature of Health
4. The Right to Self-Determination
5. Relationships with Colleagues and others

*Provision 2:* The nurse's primary commitment is to the patient, whether an individual, family, group, community, or population.

1. Primacy of the Patient's Interests
2. Conflicts of Interests for Nurses
3. Collaboration
4. Professional Boundaries

*Provision 3:* The nurse promotes, advocates for, and protects the rights, health, and safety of the patient.

1. Protection of the Rights of Privacy and Confidentiality
2. Protection of Human Participants in Research
3. Performance Standards and Review Mechanisms
4. Professional Responsibility in Promoting a Culture of Safety
5. Protection of Patient Health and Safety by Acting on Questionable Practice
6. Patient Protection and Impaired Practice

*Provision 4:* The nurse has authority, accountability, and responsibility for nursing practice, makes decisions, and takes action consistent with the obligation to promote health and to provide optimal care.

1. Authority, Accountability, and Responsibility
2. Accountability for Nursing Judgments, Decisions, and Actions
3. Responsibility for Nursing Judgments, Decisions, and Actions
4. Assignment and Delegation of Nursing Activities or Tasks

*Provision 5:* The nurse owes the same duties to self as to others, including the responsibility to promote health and safety, preserve wholeness of character and integrity, maintain competence, and continue personal and professional growth.

1. Duties to Self and others
2. Promotion of Personal Health, Safety, and Well-Being
3. Preservation of Wholeness of Character
4. Preservation of Integrity
5. Maintenance of Competence and Continuation of Professional Growth
6. Continuation of Personal Growth



*Provision 6:* The nurse through individual and collective effort, establishes, maintains, and improves the ethical environment of the work setting and conditions of employment that are conducive to safe, quality health care.

1. The Environment and Moral Virtue
2. The Environment and Ethical Obligation
3. Responsibility of the Health Care Environment

*Provision 7:* The nurse in all roles and settings, advances the profession through research and scholarly inquiry, professional standards development, and the generation of both nursing and health policy

1. Contributions through Research and Scholarly Inquiry
2. Contributions through Developing, Maintaining, and Implementing Professional Practice Standards
3. Contributions through Nursing and Health Policy Development

*Provision 8:* The nurse collaborates with other health professionals and the public to protect human rights, promote health diplomacy, and reduce health disparities.

1. Health is a Universal Right
2. Collaboration for health, Human Rights, and Health Diplomacy
3. Obligation to Advance Health and Human Rights and Reduce Disparities
4. Collaboration for Human Rights in Complex, Extreme, or Extraordinary Practice Settings

*Provision 9:* The profession of nursing, collectively through its professional organizations, must articulate nursing values, maintain the integrity of the profession, and integrate principles of social justice into nursing and health policy.

1. Articulation and Assertion of Values
2. Integrity of the Profession
3. Integrating Social Justice
4. Social Justice in Nursing and Health Policy

In summary the American Nurses' Association's Code of Ethics for Nurses ensures that nurses are doing their best to provide care for their patients and communities while they are supporting each other in the process so that all nurses can fulfill their ethical and professional obligations. The Code of Ethics for Nurses is a reflection of the ethical heritage of nursing and a guide for all nurses now and into the future.

<sup>1</sup> ANA, *Code of Ethics for Nurses*, (Nursingbooks.org: Silver Springs, MD, 2015), p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Slusser, M., Garcia, L., Reed, C., & McGinnis, P., *Foundations of Interprofessional Collaborative Practice in Health Care*, (Elsevier: St. Louis, Missouri, 2019), pp.58, 65-66.

<sup>3</sup> ANA, *Code of Ethics for Nurses*, p. 12.

<sup>4</sup> Lonergan, B., *Method in Theology*, (University of Toronto Press: Toronto, Canada, 2013), p. 49, 248-49, 7, 17.

<sup>5</sup> Byrne, P., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan's Foundations for Ethics*, (University of Toronto Press: Toronto, Canada, 2017), pp. 31-36.

<sup>6</sup> Flanagan, J., *The Quest for Self-Knowledge: An Essay in Lonergan's Philosophy*, (University of Toronto Press: Toronto, Canada, 1997), pp. 8-15.

<sup>7</sup> ANA, *Code of Ethics for Nurses*, pp. 1-37.

## Lonergan's Saving Grace

Robert Faraci

How does a Catholic university square its Catholic identity with religious diversity? My conviction is that, in order to identify legitimately as “Catholic,” a university must locate itself *within* the Church and its educational and research mission *within* the Church’s mission to save souls. Religious diversity within the university community challenges it to specify how its non-Catholic members participate in its mission and what its mission is to them. At some point in appropriating its Catholic identity, each university must engage the Church’s traditional (though now often equivocal) assertion that Her faith is the *one true religion*. She grounds this assertion in Her divine origin: Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, the only Mediator between God and man, constituted and commissioned Her to proclaim the kerygma to all, teach them Her faith in Him, and invite them into Her. Although She understands that God’s power to save is not bound by the means of saving souls, He has entrusted to Her, She also knows that He has not revealed to Her any other means. For this reason, the eternal fate of non-Catholics has long remained a matter of contention within the Church. Hence the challenge religious diversity poses.

The above was the backdrop of my encounter, in the 2019 Faculty Summer Seminar, with Frederick Crowe’s presentation of Lonergan’s “universalist” view of religion<sup>1</sup>. In contrast to many authoritative voices, Lonergan did acknowledge paths to salvation outside the Church. He viewed multiple historical forms of religion as fruitful expressions of a saving grace that is granted *to everyone*, logically prior to all religious expressions, even to those without religion.<sup>2</sup> Now, other Christian theologians concede the availability of grace outside the visible Church, even for those who do not believe in, or even know of, Christ or God, although some would argue that, even so, all grace originates in Christ.<sup>3</sup> In some sectors of the Church, this view has undercut motivation to preach the Gospel and propose Baptism. Does this view likewise dispense with the need for a Catholic university to take on the task that I described in my opening paragraph? I argue below that it does *not*, because many prominent Church leaders reject all versions of the view, and because I believe that cogent objections apply to Lonergan’s version in particular. The discussion remains open, and pertinent questions are not yet settled.

In a brief essay, I can do no more than cast off from the shore. As a novice in this field, I concede enthusiastically that, as with everything in Lonergan’s subtle and nuanced thought, all his pertinent ideas and technical concepts must be thought through with far greater care than is possible here. Yet that is the adventure of Lonergan, and I offer this to start a dialogue.

In Lonergan’s understanding of religious experience, as reported by Crowe, there is an infrastructure of religious experience apart from and logically prior to the cognitive operations that objectify and interpret experience using words and meanings. Consciousness at this level is intentional, but no object within the world is intended. There is an upward reaching toward

transcendence not yet objectified; and God, Whose existence Lonergan affirms, reaches down, in response<sup>4</sup>, and imparts His Spirit as love (*caritas*, charity) to all persons. He regards this gift of love as *grace sufficient unto salvation*; that is, grace that, when cooperated with, assures heaven.

Lonergan cites 1 Timothy 2:4: “[God,] Who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (that is, of Christ; cf. vv. 5-6.) (emphasis added)<sup>5</sup> to establish that his universalist view corresponds to traditional Catholic teaching on God’s universal salvific will, though he concedes that not all witnesses of the Tradition identify *grace sufficient unto salvation* with *caritas*.<sup>6</sup> Significantly, the portion of the citation from 1 Timothy 2:4 that I emphasize above does not figure in Lonergan’s argument for this correspondence. Why not? The answer, I believe, is that, arguably contrary to St. Paul’s intention, Lonergan not only distinguishes saving *love* from *faith* and *knowing*, as does Catholic Tradition, but also subordinates *faith* and *knowing* to *love* to the point of asserting *love*’s sufficiency and denying *faith*’s necessity for salvation, which Catholic tradition does *not*.

Recall that, for Lonergan, the saving gift of *love* enters religious experience at the level of infrastructure, prior to objectification, whereas *faith* requires cognitive acts of *believing* and *knowing*, involving objectification and interpretation at the level of superstructure.<sup>7</sup> Now, Lonergan does indeed acknowledge a vital role for the unrestricted desire to *know* in religious experience. *Charity* drives and feeds on our desire to *know* What or Whom we *love* and to *know* ourselves and others in and through this (if all goes well) ever-widening embrace of *love*. Objectification is instrumental to the achievement of *being in love* without restriction that is, for Lonergan, the mature fruit of self-transcendence and religious experience. Objectification or interpretation likewise enables the vital communication of religious experience that embeds religious experience in human historical existence at all levels, personal, social, and cultural.<sup>8</sup> It is through objectification that the infrastructure grounds the (often contradictory and incompatible) religious systems that pervade social and personal, including private, existence.

Yet, despite acknowledging the (instrumental) role of *knowing* in achieving *being in love*, Lonergan exalts pre-objectified *love*, unsullied by the limitations and risks of objectification, and contemplates a withdrawal from all objectifying and interpreting into a pristine mystical state, where the gift of God resides “in its purest state.”<sup>9</sup>

Upon this foundation of pre-objectified experience, where *love* is given for salvation, not (yet) *faith*, Lonergan establishes his profession of the possibility of salvation without *faith* in or *knowing* the Person of Christ—perhaps not even in heaven, if heaven is a permanent state of pre-objectified *love*. It clearly offers a solution to the problem of the salvation of non-Christians:<sup>10</sup> As stated, since salvation does not depend on the interpretation of religious experience, one can *love* God in a pure, authentic way (“authenticity attained”) without *knowing* Him, so that even the “alleged atheism of the Buddhist” is perhaps “the expression of non-objectivized experience” “in the ultimate solitude of the mystical state.”<sup>11</sup>

But I contend that, from an authentically Catholic point of view, this is a rather radical version of *religious indifferentism*, the erroneous idea that salvation is accessible through

multiple, even logically contradictory, religious systems,<sup>12</sup> in particular, even through systems that *contradict*, and not merely *ignore* the Creed. For a Catholic, true *love* of God cannot be lived out without *faith* in Him<sup>13</sup> and striving to *know* Him as a Person. As Tolkien put it, "the chief purpose of life, for any one of us, is to increase according to our capacity our knowledge of God by all the means we have, and to be moved by it to praise and thanks."<sup>14</sup> Through the Church, the pillar of Truth<sup>15</sup>, God reveals *knowledge* of Him to our minds to magnify and perfect the *love* He pours into our hearts for Him, ourselves, and all others in Him. *Faith*, of which *belief* (a cognitive act) is an essential component, is more than instrumental to *love*; *faith* engenders *knowledge* that is indispensable to *love* and ultimately one with it. In heaven, we will *know* as we are *known* and *love* perfectly.

That *faith* is indispensable to *holiness*, that it elevates not only *love*, but also *reason*, and even *meditation* and *contemplation*, is described inspiringly by Peter Krasniewski:

[Catholicism insists on the] harmony of faith and reason—and not just their harmony, but the dependence of human reason on the creative divine Reason or *Logos*. For it is not merely the case that faith does not *contradict* reason, as if the two are compatible partners on an equal footing. Rather, human reason is a finite and fallible light that emanates from the prior, all-encompassing light of God, who is also the font of life, love, freedom, and wisdom. Consequently, men can be truly reasonable and free only when they must submit their intellects and wills to this light and live in its radiance. Faith in divine revelation encompasses and elevates all the functions of reason. Without this light, men are doomed to the darkness of self-will, the tempest of irrational urges, and ultimately the madness of nihilism.<sup>16</sup>

In summary, I conclude, at least preliminarily, from my introduction to Crowe's account that Lonergan's "universalist" view denies the Church's contention that both *love* and *faith* are necessary for salvation, that they belong to the only path revealed to Her, even while She affirms that God Himself is not bound to the means of salvation that He has entrusted to Her. If this is correct, Lonergan's view cannot be accepted as a solution to the problem of the salvation of non-Christians. It follows that, if the mission of a truly Catholic university has some part in the Church's mission to save souls, then the challenge to specify the mission and the relationship of non-Catholic members to that mission and its responsibility to those members remains.

<sup>1</sup> Crowe, F., "Lonergan's Universalist View of Religion," *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies*, 12 (1994), pp. 147-179.

<sup>2</sup> I believe Lonergan might have agreed that the efficacy of this grace could be jeopardized in the development of these historical forms through sin, bias, and decline.

<sup>3</sup> Crowe, F., "Lonergan's Universalist View of Religion," *Method Journal of Lonergan Studies*, 12 (1994), p. 173.

<sup>4</sup> God actually initiates; all are imbued with a yearning for self-transcendence that is ordered precisely to the gift of Himself as love that God wills for them.

<sup>5</sup> Douay-Rheims Catholic Bible Online, [www.drbo.org](http://www.drbo.org), 1 Tim 2:4.

<sup>6</sup> Crowe, F., "Lonergan's Universalist View of Religion," *Method Journal of Lonergan Studies*, 12 (1994), p. 159, n. 39.

<sup>7</sup> Crowe, F., "Lonergan's Universalist View of Religion," *Method Journal of Lonergan Studies*, 12 (1994), p. 165.

<sup>8</sup> Crowe, F., "Lonergan's Universalist View of Religion," *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies*, 12 (1994), pp. 154, 162, and 165-168.

<sup>9</sup> Crowe, F., "Lonergan's Universalist View of Religion," *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies*, 12 (1994), pp. 160, 162, 163, *inter alia*.

<sup>10</sup> Crowe, F., "Lonergan's Universalist View of Religion," *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies*, 12 (1994), p. 173.

<sup>11</sup> Crowe, F., "Lonergan's Universalist View of Religion," *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies*, 12 (1994), p. 163.

<sup>12</sup> Crowe, F., "Lonergan's Universalist View of Religion," *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies*, 12 (1994), p. 168.

<sup>13</sup> *Douay-Rheims Catholic Bible Online*, [www.drbo.org](http://www.drbo.org), Heb 11:6.

<sup>14</sup> Rutler, G., "Airbrushing Religion", <https://www.churchmilitant.com/news/article/airbrushing-religion>.

<sup>15</sup> *Douay-Rheims Catholic Bible Online*, [www.drbo.org](http://www.drbo.org), 1 Tim 3:15.

<sup>16</sup> Kwasniewski, P., "Faith and Reason under Attack. The Catholic Church Must Defend Both," *LifeSite News*, (14 May 2019), <https://www.lifesitenews.com/blogs/faith-and-reason-are-under-attack-the-catholic-church-must-defend-both>

## The Ethics of Discernment, the Scale of Values, and the Human Sciences

Anthony L. Haynor

In his presentation to the 2019 Faculty Summer Seminar and in his book, *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan's Foundation for Ethics*, Patrick Byrne addressed many topics of profound importance. Of particular interest to me as a long-time student of the human sciences was the discussion of the “scale of values” and its connection to particular disciplinary discourses and the ways in which they can and should be integrated.

By the “scale of values,” Lonergan means the hierarchy of value orders comprising the human condition. As Byrne puts it, “courses of action and their values on a lower-level are preferred and chosen in such ways as to realize, promote, and maintain values at the higher level.”<sup>1</sup> First, there is the “vital” order of values, which for Lonergan includes our pursuit of “health, strength, grace, and vigour.”<sup>2</sup> Clearly, according to Byrne, “it would be appropriate to add others such as nutrition, growth, development, flourishing, and fertility.”<sup>3</sup> All of these involve our “biological homeostasis, growth, and reproduction.”<sup>4</sup> Next, there is the “social” order of values, encompassing the “mores of a society—the norms of appropriate behavior in various social settings.”<sup>5</sup> While the “vital” order refers to “particular goods,” the “social” order involves what Lonergan calls the “good of order” that “conditions the vital values of the whole community.”<sup>6</sup> The ethical focus here is on cooperation, dependability, and peace in an effort to minimize confusion, chaos, and violence, given the reality that we, humans, are interdependent and must figure out ways to live together. The next order of values is “cultural,” which for Lonergan, as interpreted by Byrne, refers to “the standards by which people reflect upon their ways of cooperating and living together.”<sup>7</sup> As understood by Byrne, “cultural values do not merely provide justification in order to maintain a society’s practices. They also criticize and correct those practices in order to foster value growth and development of the society.”<sup>8</sup> Moving up the scale we come to the order of “personal” values, which speaks to “our human self-transcendence whenever we go beyond our current state—when, for example, we awaken in the morning to become sensitively conscious, or when we go beyond mere sensitive consciousness, or when we go beyond mere sensitive consciousness in asking and answering questions for intelligence and reflection.”<sup>9</sup> Self-transcendence, thus, involves discerning which cultural standards are worthy of one’s personal assent and commitment, and which need to be jettisoned or modified in light of personal standards that emerge from a process of moral conversion. Finally, there is the order of “religious” value, which involves, as interpreted by Byrne, a “total and permanent self-surrender without conditions, qualification, or reservations to the vocation of unrestricted being-in-love.”<sup>10</sup> In arriving at this penultimate order of value we lose ourselves in the “transcendent value of the sacred, the divine.”<sup>11</sup>

Analogous to the cognitional operations that comprise the Generalized Empirical Method, higher stages complete and condition lower stages. This does not mean that the lower stages become in any way superfluous—in fact they serve as mechanisms or vehicles for the realization and promotion of higher-order values. Clearly implied is a bi-directional process—out of lower



orders of value “emerge” higher level orders (bottom up), which once acquiring a facticity then condition and structure lower orders of value (top down).

After presenting the five orders of value (which was put forward by Lonergan in *Method in Theology*), Byrne proceeds to integrate it with a parallel framework proposed by Lonergan in *Insight*—one dealing with “higher viewpoints” and “explanatory genera.” The focus here pivots to the sciences—natural and also human—the goal of which is intelligibility achievable through an understanding of hierarchically organized levels of reality. The genera put forward by Lonergan are the “physical,” the “chemical,” the “biological,” the “sensitive,” and the “human.” Byrne wraps this hierarchy into what he calls “a single expanded scale of value preference” consisting of the physical, chemical, biological, sensate, vital, social, cultural, personal, and religious.<sup>12</sup>

In light of my commitment to an integrated human science, I was led to reflect on how the “expanded scale of value preference” proposed by Byrne relates to and can serve this worthwhile project. In the first place, major advances in genetics and neuroscience (especially in the last 30 years) have shed considerable light on “biological” and “sensate” phenomena. An issue of continuing contention has to do with the degree to which the mind or consciousness (the sensate order) is “reducible” to neural networks, as opposed to representing an emergent order of value that structures our experiential attentiveness.<sup>13</sup> Lonergan and Byrne side with the latter position (the hierarchizing of the biological and the sensate), one that I find to be of critical importance in any effort to develop a viable integrated human science. Secondly, in the past four decades have emerged the fields of evolutionary biology and evolutionary psychology, seen by their proponents as providing a foundation for an integrated human science.<sup>14</sup> In this scholarship are analyzed the evolutionary roots not only of our biological wiring, but also progressively of our consciousness (the sensate order), our “vital” existential needs as human beings, and the social orders and cultural justifications that have emerged over the course of our civilizational history.

There is a call among many evolutionary biologists and psychologists for the discernment of “personal” and also “intersubjective” values (see below) informed by the insights of evolutionary science, values capable of guiding us to greater human flourishing. I think that it is safe to say that evolutionary scientists (and the same can be said of neuroscientists as a group) never get to the “religious” order, focusing as they do on the naturalistic plane of the human condition. This having been said, evolutionary science has much to offer as we continue to build an integrated human science, but some of us (Lonergan and Byrne included) take the position that it is only when the human condition is placed within a larger transcendent or “telic” context that our quest for purpose and meaning can be fully realized.<sup>15</sup> A third issue has to do with the nature of the self in an integrated human science. The “expanded scale of value preference” brings to light the various components of the self, and can in the process contribute to scholarship on what has been an undertheorized concept in the human sciences. Through the prism of the expanded scale of values we can see the self as a unique constellation of conscious ordering conditioned by vital, existential needs that are conditioned by social institutions and cultural justifications that are conditioned by our personal values and ultimately by an unrestricted being-in-love. The self can thus be recognized as the multi-order construct that it in

fact is.<sup>16</sup> Finally, I would like to suggest a possible addition to the “expanded scale of value preference.” It seems to me that beyond the “personal” there is an order that could be labelled the “intersubjective.” Not only is it necessary to develop personal criteria for the maintenance and transformation of social orders and their cultural justification, but it is critically important that we develop ways of developing those criteria “together” as a community. This would involve a process of consensus building, the forging of a “cosmopolis”<sup>17</sup> (a concept developed by Lonergan and referred to by Byrne). Even though Lonergan and Byrne point to the “intersubjective” dimension (within the context of an ongoing human drama in which we are called to redemption in response to decline), its omission from the scale of value orders does raise a question. Is not the construction of a communal consensus, that is, of a “cosmopolis,” a higher viewpoint to which we should aspire as members of the human family? If so, can a strong case be made for its explicit inclusion within the scale of values?

<sup>1</sup> Byrne, P., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan’s Foundations for Ethics*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), pp. 260-261.

<sup>2</sup> Byrne, P., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan’s Foundations for Ethics*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), p. 261.

<sup>3</sup> Byrne, P., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan’s Foundations for Ethics*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), p. 261.

<sup>4</sup> Byrne, P., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan’s Foundations for Ethics*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), p. 261.

<sup>5</sup> Byrne, P., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan’s Foundations for Ethics*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), p. 261.

<sup>6</sup> Lonergan, B., *Method in Theology*, (Herder and Herder: New York, 1972), p. 31.

<sup>7</sup> Byrne, P., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan’s Foundations for Ethics*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), p. 262.

<sup>8</sup> Byrne, P., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan’s Foundations for Ethics*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), p. 263.

<sup>9</sup> Byrne, P., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan’s Foundations for Ethics*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), p. 264.

<sup>10</sup> Byrne, P., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan’s Foundations for Ethics*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), p. 265.

<sup>11</sup> Byrne, P., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan’s Foundations for Ethics*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), p. 265.

<sup>12</sup> Byrne, P., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan’s Foundations for Ethics*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), p. 400.

<sup>13</sup> See for example, Koch, C., *Consciousness*, (MIT Press: Cambridge, MA, 2012).

<sup>14</sup> For an impressive recent attempt, see Wilson, D., *This view of life*, (Pantheon Books: New York, 2019).

<sup>15</sup> For an analysis by a human scientist of the place of the “telic system” as over and above the “action system” see Parsons, T., “A paradigm of the human condition” in *Action theory and the human condition* (The Free Press: New York, 1978).

<sup>16</sup> For a compelling dissection and analysis of the self from a personalist perspective, see Smith, C. *What is a person? Rethinking humanity, social life, and the moral good from the person up*, (University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 2010).

<sup>17</sup> Byrne, P., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan’s Foundations for Ethics*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), p. 397.

## Applying the Ethics of Discernment to Clinical Education

Kathleen Nagle

What does it take to be a good baseball umpire? To clarify the relevance of discernment to a discussion of ethics (and to place it in the context of self-appropriation), Byrne<sup>1</sup> presents the example of an umpire differentiating balls from strikes. He must have some sense of what a good pitch is (value), and he must be concentrating on baseball (self-reflective). He clearly was not born with the ability to call strikes; he had to develop the skill over many years of observing and learning about baseball. He may have played baseball. His concept of a “good” pitch is based on having seen terrible pitches, great pitches, and many in between. He does not, however, spend his entire life evaluating pitches. Were he to see a person toss an orange, he would be unlikely to “turn on his umpire brain,” even if he noticed that the throw missed the basket. If his two-year-old grandson threw a ball to him, he might think more about making a big show of catching it than whether it was in his own strike zone. Discernment requires the ability to assign value and to know that you are doing so.

A critical feature of discernment, as Byrne describes it, is attention. Discernment is a “refined form of attention” that “presupposes a development or even a transformation of the person engaged” in it.<sup>2</sup> Clearly, then, when considering the ethics of discernment, it is not enough to be discerning in the typical sense of applying expertise. One must exhibit “double intentionality,” or “attentiveness to the matter at hand, but also attentiveness to one’s way of being attentive.”<sup>3</sup> I interpret this as a meta-attention to one’s own practice. In the case of the baseball umpire, this would mean not only being aware that he is umpiring in the moment, but also thinking about how well he is umpiring as he is doing it. In the healthcare professions, it is vital that we pay attention to matters at hand, but also that we attend to patterns of our own behavior over time.

Healthcare providers are expected to bring objectivity to their decision-making processes, but objective data are not enough. To extend Byrne’s analogy, the umpire doesn’t just see the ball go over home plate; he has to understand what it means when it happens. The greater his discernment, the better he should be at making the right call. Clinically, we must have paid attention to successful treatments by ourselves and others to learn the right call for a given patient. Clinical intuitions will emerge when the conditions encourage them. In addition to paying attention, these conditions include having reflected on what is and is not ethical.

Healthcare professions have codes of ethics that provide fairly basic ethical principles for professional conduct. However, they presuppose a level of thoughtfulness and self-reflection that may be unwarranted. For example, Principle I of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association’s Code of Ethics<sup>4</sup> states that “Individuals shall honor their responsibility to hold paramount the welfare of persons they serve professionally or who are participants in research and scholarly activities, and they shall treat animals involved in research in a humane manner.”

A series of twenty rules follows, many of which proscribe unethical behavior. Leaving aside the open question of what many of these words mean in context, it is not made clear what ethical behavior looks like within a typical patient-provider interaction. If new clinicians are not asked to reflect on what it looks like when they behave ethically, they may have trouble recognizing when they do not.

In evaluating our behavior as healthcare providers, we can ask ourselves the types of questions raised by Byrne to address the ethics of discernment. Mirroring Lonergan's Generalized Empirical Method for understanding how we come to "know," these include:

- What are we doing when we are ethical?
- How do we know that what we are doing is ethical?
- Are we aware of what we're doing when we are being ethical?
- Do we understand the implications of what we do?

Questions such as these do not occur naturally to students, but it is critical to their development as clinicians that they are aware of their own behaviors, their own beliefs and their own reasons for why they do what they do with patients. Their discernment may be negligible to start, but it should improve if they engage in self-reflection with these questions.

As an instructor of graduate students in speech-language pathology, I have attempted to introduce reflections into my courses. Students resist writing reflections and those in professional programs tend to resist open-ended, not-obviously-related-to-coursework questions even more. To that end, I have adapted my questions to students as follows:

- What do you see, hear, notice about the patient?
- What did you expect the patient to say, sound like, look like?
- Why do you think you had these expectations?
- How might this change your approach to the next patient?

To apply these types of questions to the realm of healthcare ethics, I might start by asking what it would look like to ethically examine a patient, and how they came to their conclusion. I might also ask whether they had considered whether they were holding paramount the welfare of the patient before examining him.

Clinicians make hundreds of decisions every day, whether they are aware of it or not. Although they may not have 20,000 fans judging them with every call, some of these decisions may be far more consequential than calling balls and strikes. We owe it to our patients and ourselves to be discerning in our practice and to continue to reflect on our behavior long beyond when we have become "experts."

<sup>1</sup> Byrne, P.H., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan's Foundations for Ethics*, (University of Toronto Press: Toronto, 2018).

<sup>2</sup> Byrne, P.H., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan's Foundations for Ethics*, (University of Toronto Press: Toronto, 2018), pp. 14-15.

<sup>3</sup> Byrne, P.H., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan's Foundations for Ethics*, (University of Toronto Press: Toronto, 2018), p.15.

<sup>4</sup>American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (2016). *Code of ethics* [Ethics]. Available from [www.asha.org/policy/](http://www.asha.org/policy/).

**Byrne's Ethics of Discernment and Nicotera's Circle of Insight:  
Inviting Personal and Institutional Movement toward  
More Ethical Decision-making**

Anthony Nicotera

In his introduction to *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan's Foundations for Ethics*, Patrick Byrne shares a process for thinking and acting ethically that mirrors Lonergan's inquiry into knowing. He asserts that Lonergan's insights with respect to knowing can inform our efforts to practice ethics. He proposes that we ask three central questions that parallel Lonergan's questions about knowing: "'What am I doing when I am being ethical?' 'Why is doing that being ethical?,' and 'What is brought about by doing that?'"<sup>1</sup> Byrne's answer to these questions, rooted in Lonergan's method, is complex and multifaceted, involving experience, inquiry, critical reflection, questioning regarding appropriate action consistent with experience, inquiry, and action, "all within a converted horizon of feelings for values that is in conformity with the notion of value, being-in-love, and the normative scale of values."<sup>2</sup> This process of ethical discernment involves persistent questioning evolving toward deeper truth, and just, compassionate, ethical action that invites greater social as well as individual good and well-being. This process, this questioning requires self-transcendence in order to know oneself most fully and discern most appropriate ethical action.

As Lonergan himself asserts, "Just as it is one's own self-transcendence that enables one to know others accurately and to judge them fairly, so inversely it is through knowledge and appreciation of others that we come to know ourselves and to fill out and refine our apprehension of values."<sup>3</sup> There is an inherent dialectical, relational aspect of values development and ethical discernment. Our values and ethics require that human persons engage in questioning and reflecting that result in insights leading to value judgments about personal and social action in order to promote more just, ethical action. This process for ethical discernment and decision-making, according to Byrne, is not only rational and reflective, but also requires consideration of feelings and empathy as an essential complement to ethical reasoning. From a social work perspective, this makes sense inasmuch as our ethical code mandates that we address the entire bio-psycho-social-spiritual person, recognizing that human beings are more than rational, medical, biological beings, that they also have the capacity for feelings, emotions, empathy, relationships, and spiritual lives. Thus, ethical behavior and discernment that moves us toward healing, hope, and just action necessarily must consider how it is that human persons see, understand, and know the reality in which they exist, and the ethical conundrums they confront. Just as a strict medical model is inadequate to address the whole human person's psychological, social, and spiritual well-being, so too is reason alone insufficient for ethical discernment and decision-making.

Byrne's questions, insights, and process for ethical discernment complement the See, Reflect, Act, Circle of Insight process that I have created to consider more socially just social work pedagogy and practice. The Circle of Insight process requires first, looking deeply at, paying careful attention to, experiences of thinking and acting ethically; second, critical reflection upon these experiences, applying and acquiring learning, in order to more fully understand and evaluate ethical thought and action; and third, consideration of appropriate action in light of the knowledge gained by fully engaging this process. This See, Reflect, Act process, taken together with Byrne's insistence on the consideration of feelings and empathy and their role in ethical reasoning, hold open the possibility of transformative inquiry, discernment, and insight that can guide our ethical decision-making, not only as individuals, but also as social workers and as institutions of higher learning. Together, they summon a more nuanced, process-driven, less formulaic, approach to ethics. Like the Circle of Insight's framework and process orientation for discerning action that is just, so too Byrne's approach engages questioning and reflection that is not limited to one perspective or view, but rather requires continual inquiry and questioning from various perspectives, until the questions and potential questions have been exhausted.

Byrne's Lonergan-based process of ethical discernment also mirrors or parallels the Circle of Insight's dialectical, open, purposeful, and enlightening process. It is a dialectical and open process that invites interplay among facts and theory, practice and principle. As I write in my recent *Journal of Social Work Education* article, "This dialectical, open process is also purposeful and enlightening because it moves toward enlightenment—critical consciousness and awareness of our person-in-environment context and interconnectedness. It invites those engaged to see the other as sister or brother, as oneself."<sup>4</sup> This way of looking deeply at, absorbing with all of one's senses, the reality of ethical dilemmas in the person-in-environment human condition, this ability to see the truth that we inter-are, we cannot and do not exist outside of relationship one with the other, and our very essence is comprised of the essence of other beings and life, lies at the heart of ethical discernment and inquiry. This process requires what I refer to as the Circle of Insight's ABCs (and D and E): authentic, bold, committed, dialectical engagement. Byrne's emphasis on the importance of empathy, feelings, and imagination inform the Circle of Insight process. Thich Nhat Hahn (2019) puts it this way, "With deep looking, understanding will arise, and compassion will be born.... understanding and compassion are what makes happiness possible."<sup>5</sup> This empathic compassion, this feeling with the other, and looking deeply to see in the other our own deep desires, our own pain, our own joy, our own capacity to harm, our own ability to heal, holds open the possibility of deep transformation and liberation. It also engages our imagination in a way that reflects, for Byrne, in the spirit of Aristotle, the Apostle Paul, and St. Ignatius of Loyola, ethical discernment that incorporates self-appropriation, the decision to be discerning, in the context of unconditional love and community. Furthermore, in this imaginative, integrative, personal and collective, spirit of ethical discernment and decision-making, "one understands that harm to the other results in harm to the self, and harm to the self results in harm to the other". Thus, together, Byrne's ethical discernment process and the Circle of Insight framework invite a way of seeing reality using both the light of knowledge and reason, as well as the insights of empathy, feelings, and intuition, to question, critically reflect, and act in a way that invites unconditional love and mutual liberation.



Taken together, Byrne's Ethics of Discernment and the Circle of Insight framework offer practical guidance and learnings that shine a light on critical notions necessary for just, ethical discernment and decision-making on personal, professional, and institutional levels, e.g. at Seton Hall. The both/and nature of human persons as persons-in-environments, persons with reason and feelings, full of matter and mystery, energy and empathy, requires a keen sensitivity to the context in which ethical discernment takes place. There can be no cookie-cutter model. There must be a respect for diversity, and a deep empathetic listening to the other. There must be an openness to varying points of view and perspectives, searching for questions yet to be asked and considered. Furthermore, the ethical discernment process must maintain consistency of means and ends. The process itself must be rooted in love and compassion, seeing with the eyes of unconditional love in order to move us in that direction or attain that goal. The process must promote personal and collective self-examination, for ethical action requires recurring introspection, questioning, and examination on both the individual and institutional levels. The process must foster constructive social action, for love without action remains hollow. As St. Ignatius admonishes in his spiritual classic, *The Spiritual Exercises*, love ought to manifest more in deed than word. It is my sincere hope that taken together, Byrne's *Ethics of Discernment* and my *Circle of Insight* will invite deeper, concrete ethical discernment and engagement that fosters individual and institutional movement toward more ethical, just, transformative pedagogy and practice.

<sup>1</sup> Byrne, P., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan's Foundations for Ethics*, (University of Toronto Press: Toronto, 2016), p. 285.

<sup>2</sup> Byrne, P., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan's Foundations for Ethics*, (University of Toronto Press: Toronto, 2016), p. 286.

<sup>3</sup> Byrne, P., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan's Foundations for Ethics*, (University of Toronto Press: Toronto, 2016), p. 236.

<sup>4</sup> Nicotera, A., Social justice and social work, a fierce urgency: Recommendations for social work social justice pedagogy, *Journal of Social Work Education*, DOI: 10.1080/10437797.2019.1600443, (2019), p. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Nicotera, A., Social justice and social work, a fierce urgency: Recommendations for social work social justice pedagogy, *Journal of Social Work Education*, DOI: 10.1080/10437797.2019.1600443, (2019), p. 3.

## Seeing the Face of God: Ethical Discernment and the Opioid Epidemic

Melinda D. Papaccio

A 29-year-old man crashes into a gas station, killing a father and son who are stopped by the pumps. The roof of their car is torn off by the impact. An attendant is also killed. Just before impact a witness sees that the man driving is slumped behind the wheel. When first responders arrive, they Narcan him back to life. Perhaps this is when he learns that he has just killed three people and has no recollection of how it happened. Word of the accident catches fire on social media and the comments begin. He's a "loser," "a doped up addict," "a junkie," "a killer, plain and simple," "he has no soul, he sold it years ago on the filthy streets of Paterson," "hope he rots in prison." There are also the calls to action: "we need the guillotine," "give him the electric chair," "Narcan should be banned!"<sup>1</sup> The emotional responses of the public are not surprising. In fact, they demonstrate a level of empathy for those who died. The intensity of the grief will overwhelm all who suffered loss on that day, and it will not go away. While we may agree on some level, the comments are cruel and useless.

In discussing this accident, I do not wish to minimize the tragic loss of life. I present it because it provides horrifying evidence of our failure to address the human suffering wrought by the Opioid Epidemic. Our unwillingness to ethically discern a way forward, one that works for the human good in the fullest sense, is the reason. Pope Francis was talking to all of us when, during a 2013 visit with a group of people in recovery, he implored all "to reach out to those in difficulty because in them we see the face of Christ, because in these persons, the flesh of Christ suffers."<sup>2</sup> Clearly it is difficult to see the face of God in someone who has just killed three innocent people. But this is what the Holy Father is asking us to do and it may be the only way to address the Opioid Epidemic and stop the suffering.

We could say that those who made those comments, who even called for the death of the driver, made decisions without discernment. In his latest work *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan's Foundations for Ethics*, Patrick Byrne writes that discernment involves a "refined form of attention," that goes "beyond ordinary perceptiveness" and requires "extra effort and expertise ... to get things right."<sup>3</sup> After nearly three decades of getting things wrong with regard to this epidemic, of perpetuating the stigma, we need to make a concerted effort to get it right through ethical discernment. Doing so must begin with an expansive "ethical inquiry," an investigation into the facts about addiction, with an effort to answer the question "What is going on?"<sup>4</sup> Why would someone use heroin and get behind the wheel? Is the driver evil, depraved, or what? What was going on with him?

So often, we don't bother with such questions because we think there is nothing more to know. The driver used heroin: end of story. This kind of thinking involves subscribing to commonly held assumptions based on biases against the marginalized group in question. That lack of information and understanding can have disastrous results because, as Byrne explains, "[e]thical action requires more than good will. Much harm has been done by well-meaning

people who have lacked genuine knowledge of the facts....”<sup>5</sup> The harm is in the perpetuation of the stigma against the addicted which is so strong that we often have little interest in the facts about this epidemic. Here are some facts: An average of 130 Americans die each day from overdose, over 70,200 in 2017 alone. In less than 20 years, more Americans have died from overdoses than American soldiers who died in both world wars and the Vietnam conflict combined.<sup>6</sup> Those numbers don’t even begin to account for the millions who continue to live under the weight of their addiction, and their families. They will struggle to cope with this disease that afflicts not only body, mind, and spirit, but also carries with it the burden of social degradation, a stigma that can be as deadly as the drug itself. For the victim of addiction, there is no escape from the “enemy” within, but only the hope of keeping the demon in leash for the rest of their lives. Clinging to stigma ensures that the epidemic continues, more people die, more lives are shattered. But as the Holy Father suggested, breaking the stigma is the only way to begin healing the personal and societal wounds of addiction. Unfortunately, many of us still have trouble even deciding to accept that addiction is a disease.

Byrne speaks of “evil human decisions” being of two kinds.<sup>7</sup> In the first, we take a course of action we know we shouldn’t take. In the second, we make decisions as a result of our own indolence, bias, or unwillingness to get at the truth. When used as a basis of discernment, this second kind is a far “more destructive origin of evil human decisions.”<sup>8</sup> In this second scenario “pertinent questions are not raised” when they should be.<sup>9</sup> Often such views are held by people who mean well, people like those who expressed sorrow for the loss of life in that gas station accident. But they are also accountable for their unwillingness to see the full picture, to understand more fully what caused the accident.

It is appropriate that Byrne uses the word indolence to describe this second type of “evil decision”<sup>10</sup> as it derives from the Latin word for “freedom from pain.” The old tough love narrative has lulled us into an indolence about the addicted. It lets us off the hook. But ironically, those who buy into that narrative are in the same category as the addicted—all essentially seeking freedom from pain, from having to see the face of God in one we despise. Those all too common responses that we see in reaction to the tragic accident mentioned above (“loser,” “a doped up addict,” “a junkie,” “a killer, plain and simple,” “he has no soul,” and so on) are inadequate, and ultimately evil because they are unintelligible. The evil effect of this thinking born of indolence cannot be underestimated. Our acquiescence to it “propagates and infects the world.”<sup>11</sup> Because the stigma is perpetuated, no change occurs. This tragedy will repeat itself, because we who could engage in ethical discernment, choose not to.

New insights into the dynamics of addiction provide much hope for improved treatment. They shed new light on the addict’s experience but bump up against the wall of stigma and are slow in seeping into the public consciousness. The work of psychiatrist and addiction specialist Cynthia M.A. Geppert provides insight into the unique nature of this illness. As an adjunct to her neurobiological analysis of addiction, she finds that Aristotle’s concept of the “incontinent will” and Augustine’s “captive will” validate what she observes in her patients suffering with longstanding addiction—that “the concept of responsibility as generally understood was no longer applicable” to them.<sup>12</sup> Aristotle’s “incontinent will,” or “*akrasia*,” Greek for “lack of mastery,” was echoed later in Augustine’s concept of the “captive will.”<sup>13</sup> One incapable of

mastering will, thought, or intention, would not seem capable of the self-appropriating of one's cognitive operations in the Lonerganian sense. Geppert's concern here is with her addicted patients' inability to follow through on discernment: they may be aware of the right course of action, but are often unable to choose that right course, similar to Byrne's first type of "evil human decision." This helps to explain the phenomenon of relapse when the "will is so akratic that [the addicted person] is unable to choose differently."<sup>14</sup> Aristotle did not consider *akrasia* a vice since the akratic person may discern but cannot choose. In our culture we have it backwards: we condone and even applaud the social drinking that is freely chosen, while condemning the addict's relapse, which is not.

Geppert says such patients are "not responsible, but [are] accountable" and that the "[a]ccountability resides with the other moral agents around [the patient] who retain a greater degree of ethical responsibility"<sup>15</sup> such as health care providers, family, and other "moral shareholders in the surround of the patient."<sup>16</sup> We are all moral shareholders since this is a national epidemic. Byrne's discussion of the structure of "ethical intentionality" which involves a collaborative movement toward the human good through the "combined, structured, and coordinated actions of many individual persons" reinforces her claim.<sup>17</sup>

Often, during my experience with my son's long struggle with addiction and his eventual death from overdose last year, I prayed to find meaning in his suffering. Why were the heavy chains of this disease fastened onto my son's body and soul by that doctor's prescription? Why was he repeatedly treated with such callous disregard by health care professionals when he was so desperately ill? Why, though so many Americans have died in this epidemic, can't we muster the collective will to stop the loss of life? Byrne claims the "terrible yet awesome intelligibility and goodness of the universe ... [can help us make] sense of why such losses occur."<sup>18</sup>

He asserts that "there is a value for the sake of which these losses occur," a value that coexists with the deep suffering this tragedy inflicts, a value which "remove[s] those losses from the abyss of absolute meaninglessness."<sup>19</sup> Millions of us live each day longing for rescue from this abyss.

Byrne confirms what I sense to be true: that discernment of God's will can make it possible to "draw good out of evil," to "create meaning out of the unintelligibility" of this worst of all possible diseases that afflicted and finally killed my son.<sup>20</sup> Losing him has blown my heart wide open. It now has a place for every person suffering from this disease. In every one of them I see my son, and the love I have for him pours out to them as well. This is the good the Lord has brought from our suffering. This experience can, to quote Byrne, "open out into a truly authentic religious ethics, which is concerned to meet the unintelligibility and disvalue of the world by discerning how to value and collaborate with God and other human beings in this work of love, of *tikkun olam*, loving repair of the world."<sup>21</sup> I have invited my students to join me in this "collaboration with God" to begin to see the afflicted with new eyes, and an open heart.

In my CORE classes students read Aristotle, Augustine and other important authors in the Catholic intellectual tradition in part to discern how they can help us make sense of complex life issues, just as Dr. Geppert has done. My CORE classes also have a service-learning component in which they, prompted by engagement with these texts, participate in dialogues with people in

recovery from drug addiction. It is in keeping with our Catholic faith to see the humanity of those suffering with addiction, not to stigmatize but to empathize, and to understand the truths of this terrible disease. My experience of my son's soul-deep suffering tells me that this can put our students on a path to the practice of ethical discernment about how we treat and relate to this vulnerable community, to seeing a reflection of the God of the Cross in the faces of those who suffer.

<sup>1</sup>Attrino, A., "NJ man accused of killing 3 in crash while high didn't know heroin was laced with fentanyl, lawyer says." *NJ.com*. <https://www.nj.com/passaic-county/2019/06/nj-man-accused-of-killing-3-in-crash-while-high-didnt-know-heroin-was-laced-with-fentanyl-lawyer-says.html>. 19 June 2019.

<sup>2</sup> Pope Francis. "Visit to Saint Francis of Assisi of the Providence of God Hospital." [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2013/july/documents/papa-francesco\\_20130724\\_gmg-ospedale-rio.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2013/july/documents/papa-francesco_20130724_gmg-ospedale-rio.html). 24 July 2013.

<sup>3</sup> Byrne, Patrick H., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan's Foundations for Ethics*, (University of Toronto Press: Buffalo, NY, 2016), p. 14.

<sup>4</sup> Byrne, Patrick H., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan's Foundations for Ethics*, (University of Toronto Press: Buffalo, NY, 2016), p. 99.

<sup>5</sup> Byrne, Patrick H., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan's Foundations for Ethics*, (University of Toronto Press: Buffalo, NY, 2016), p. 37.

<sup>6</sup> "The Running Total of Drug Overdose Deaths Compared with Major U.S. War Casualties." <https://drugabuse.com/featured/the-rise-of-drug-deaths-in-america/>. Accessed 26 June 2019.

<sup>7</sup> Byrne, Patrick H., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan's Foundations for Ethics*, (University of Toronto Press: Buffalo, NY, 2016), p. 382.

<sup>8</sup> Byrne, Patrick H., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan's Foundations for Ethics*, (University of Toronto Press: Buffalo, NY, 2016), p. 382.

<sup>9</sup> Byrne, Patrick H., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan's Foundations for Ethics*, (University of Toronto Press: Buffalo, NY, 2016), p. 382.

<sup>10</sup> Byrne, Patrick H., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan's Foundations for Ethics*, (University of Toronto Press: Buffalo, NY, 2016), p. 383.

<sup>11</sup> Byrne, Patrick H., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan's Foundations for Ethics*, (University of Toronto Press: Buffalo, NY, 2016), p. 383.

<sup>12</sup>Geppert, C., MD, PhD, MPH. "Aristotle, Augustine, and Addiction." <https://www.psychiatrictimes.com/cultural-psychiatry/aristotle-augustine-and-addiction>. 1 June 2008.

<sup>13</sup>Geppert, C., MD, PhD, MPH. "Aristotle, Augustine, and Addiction." <https://www.psychiatrictimes.com/cultural-psychiatry/aristotle-augustine-and-addiction>. 1 June 2008.

<sup>14</sup>Geppert, C., MD, PhD, MPH. "Aristotle, Augustine, and Addiction." <https://www.psychiatrictimes.com/cultural-psychiatry/aristotle-augustine-and-addiction>. 1 June 2008.

<sup>15</sup>Geppert, C., MD, PhD, MPH. "Accountable but Not Responsible." <https://www.psychiatrictimes.com/addiction/accountable-not-responsible>. 2 April 2008.

<sup>16</sup>Geppert, C., MD, PhD, MPH. "Aristotle, Augustine, and Addiction." <https://www.psychiatrictimes.com/cultural-psychiatry/aristotle-augustine-and-addiction>. 1 June 2008.

<sup>17</sup> Byrne, Patrick H., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan's Foundations for Ethics*, (University of Toronto Press: Buffalo, NY, 2016), p. 310.

<sup>18</sup> Byrne, Patrick H., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan's Foundations for Ethics*, (University of Toronto Press: Buffalo, NY, 2016), p. 379.

<sup>19</sup> Byrne, Patrick H., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan's Foundations for Ethics*, (University of Toronto Press: Buffalo, NY, 2016), p. 379.

<sup>20</sup> Byrne, Patrick H., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan's Foundations for Ethics*, (University of Toronto Press: Buffalo, NY, 2016), p. 383.

<sup>21</sup> Byrne, Patrick H., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan's Foundations for Ethics*, (University of Toronto Press: Buffalo, NY, 2016), p. 385.

## **Lonergan's Rock, Rhetoric's Love: Critical Thinking, Truth, and Communication(s) Ethics**

Jon Radwan

Learning from Patrick Byrne about Lonergan's theological ethics at Seton Hall's 2019 Catholic Studies Seminar was a wonderful privilege. This essay highlights the intersubjective dimension of ethics, aligning Lonergan's cognitive pursuit of objective truth with a Platonic and Christian understanding of communication as interpersonal love. After an introduction to Lonergan's epistemology, Plato's description of rhetoric as love directs attention to how meaning and our fellow subjects help constitute our subjectivity. Critical thought advances toward truth via language and symbolism, and this mediation process ontologically grounds individual subjects within tradition and community. Just as there is an inherent ethic within knowing, so is there a self-justifying communication ethic uniting objective truth with community bonding. In St. Paul's theological terms, the Word unites humanity when we are "speaking the truth in love."<sup>1</sup>

### **Lonergan's Epistemology: The Intending Subject as Rock**

The question of truth, of what is true and how we know that it is true, is a fundamental philosophical dilemma. An epistemology or theory of knowledge attempts a response, and while there are many potential answers two horns of this dilemma are clear. One point gleams with the absolute power of objective Truth, and shining along the other are the relative yet real, felt, and lived truths belonging to billions of individual subjects. Bernard Lonergan opens his monumental 1972 book *Method in Theology* by historicizing this dilemma of truth. In classical ages abstractions are understood as most real and objectivity reigns, and in more empirically oriented eras cultural evolution drives the ascendance of relativism. As a philosopher and theologian living in a relativistic era of subjective truth, Lonergan accepts the challenge of explaining how individuals can achieve objective truth, or at least have confidence they are approaching it. Where the skeptical relativist finds no footing in constantly shifting partisan truths, Lonergan's phenomenological solution is to explain our cognitive operations as processes that are lived and felt. Approached experientially, conscious and intentional subjectivity itself becomes a firm epistemological "rock."

There is then a rock on which one can build. But let me repeat the precise character of the rock. Any theory, description, account of our conscious and intentional operations is bound to be incomplete and to admit further clarifications and extensions. But all such clarifications are to be derived from the conscious and intentional operations themselves. The rock, then, is the subject in his conscious, unobjectified attentiveness, intelligence, reasonableness, responsibility. The point to the labor of objectifying the subject and his conscious operations is that thereby one begins to learn what these are and that they are.<sup>2</sup>

To relativists doubting any and all truths, Lonergan explains that doubting, questioning, and critical thinking are all operations performed by subjects. The spirit of inquiry, the desire to know,



is a fundamental human feeling and for Lonergan the dynamic process we follow in coming to know is very real and its structure can be objectively understood and described.

With this cognitive approach inquiry does not rest with linguistic representations of a world already somehow out there independent of human interests and perceptions. Predication inevitably falls short before an infinitely complex reality because even credible statements will still necessarily leave something out. Fortunately, language's limitations do not mean that the true, good, and beautiful do not exist. On the contrary, people can and do achieve valid and ethical judgements of fact and value every day, some days more than others. Instead of focusing on our claims to external knowledge, Lonergan's solution points inward toward perception and critical method, the way we conduct our processes of knowing, on both the personal (internal) and disciplinary (public) levels.

At the personal level inquiry begins as a feeling, an existential tension between understanding and experience that arouses wonder and inspires questions. Initial answers or insights release tension and one's feelings of curiosity and even anxiety may eventually be resolved in judgements and expressed in actions. Knowledge is thus not content that humans can possess as much as it is a developing feeling, a satisfaction of one's desire to know.<sup>3</sup> Where the standard for discourse is accuracy, a correspondence between reality and representation, the standard for feelings is authenticity. Are they real and complete? Are you genuinely, deeply, fully, satisfied that you have answered all questions that experience raises? Authentic self-appropriation is approached when the subject takes ahold of their own attending-understanding-judging-acting cycle and faithfully commits to asking and answering all questions, wherever they may lead. In this way authenticity in knowing provides an internal moral axis, "the unrestricted notion of value," and to the extent that one's horizon of feeling is aligned with honest and critical inquiry "intellectual conversion" advances toward truth.<sup>4</sup>

As a lived feeling, knowing is a perpetual and dynamic process of tension and release linking our experiences to our actions. In addition, simultaneously, the entire epistemological process itself is also experienced, inspiring further tensions, questions, and insights about *how we know*. Lonergan encapsulates the reflexive nature of intentional knowing in his famous three questions—"What am I doing when I am knowing (cognitional theory); Why is doing that knowing? (objectivity); What do I know when I do that? (metaphysics or theory of being)."<sup>5</sup> Engaging these questions at the personal level encourages authenticity in our attending-understanding-judging-acting process, and at the public level of social institutions this self-correcting cycle of knowing becomes formalized in disciplinary methodologies. Hypothetico-deductive experimentation structures knowing in the physical sciences, and to outline Theological method Lonergan identifies eight successive yet interdependent knowledge building tasks theologians perform—Research, Interpretation, History, Dialectic, Foundations, Doctrines, Systematics, and Communications. The first four involve primary texts and learning from the past (*in oratione obliqua*) and the latter four contribute refined understanding to the future (*oratione recta*).

Lonergan's final functional specialty, Communications, conducts "external relations" between the field of Theology and other disciplines, diverse cultures, and diverse media.<sup>6</sup> The question of media as instruments used on external audiences or tools directed at subjects who are somehow other raises important ethical questions for Communication theory. In the next section Platonic, Aristotelian, and Pauline traditions highlight interpersonal love and divine grace within relational process.

### **Rhetoric as Love: Meaning, Critical Thinking, and Communication(s) Ethics**

In the classical Greek tradition rhetoric and religion are often cast in opposition. As democracy rises public argument displaces traditional authority and ultimately the Gods as the locus of power, enabling political leaders who hold nothing sacred but their own will. Plato captures the tragic irony of an ignorant and empowered *demos* most clearly in the *Apology*. Decades of critical dialectic from Socrates annoy arrogant authorities and eventually the city rewards him with a lethal swat. Faithful and devout to both Delphi and the pursuit of truth, his questions are so bothersome that he must be formally tried for impiety and sophistry and sentenced to death.<sup>7</sup> In *Phaedrus*, Plato's corrective for manipulative and unjust rhetoric ties persuasion to truth via an interpersonal ethic of love. When rhetors genuinely care for their audiences, offering one's beloved anything less than the true and good would fail in love and do them harm.<sup>8</sup> Similarly but less poetically, Aristotle's corrective situates Rhetoric as an off-shoot of both Dialectic and Ethics.<sup>9</sup> A genuine dialectic orients argumentation to truth, a genuine ethic turns to both the other and the good, and genuine rhetoric is the civic counterpart actualizing both as it brings the true and good to bear on each concrete situation.

Placed next to Plato and Aristotle, Lonergan's ethic for communication might appear to lean away from love and toward individualism. In particular his account of cognitive structure is personal/internal, his three epistemological questions are reflexively addressed to the self, not another or the community at large, and his disciplinary framework culminates in utilitarian/instrumental Communications. This subjective lean is balanced by Lonergan's theory of meaning and the cooperative relationship between all eight theological specialties. Rather than prescribe a set of steps to be followed, Lonergan's methodology describes processes already occurring within interdependent scholarly and ecclesial communities. Here critical method is aligned with intellectual conversion, with each sub-discipline acting as a productive node within a "framework for collaborative creativity."<sup>10</sup>

Communications, in the sub-field's plural and instrumental sense as messaging for diverse others, is Lonergan's final phase where theological method bears fruit. This external mediation phase appears to assume division from audiences, but it cannot. Because both subjects and all theological sub-fields are constitutively interdependent, shared meaning is an ontologically prior process making any fruit possible. Communication, as creative collaboration, underpins all knowledge building.

The genesis of common meaning is an ongoing process of communication, of people coming to share the same cognitive, constitutive, and effective meanings. On the elementary level this

process has been described as arising between the self and the other when, on the basis of already existing intersubjectivity, the self makes a gesture, the other makes an interpretative response, and the self discovers in the response the effective meaning of his gesture.<sup>11</sup>

This relational point is crucial in outlining an Ethics of Communication. The subject is Lonergan's cognitive rock, but rocks do not float in space independent of any context. Instead shared meaning is the subject's ontological ground, so the rock becomes less a foundational thing and more of an interactive performance where subjects co-constitute one another via cultural/traditional language and media. Communication, in the sub-field's singular sense as mutual development of shared meaning and interpersonal/social bonds, reaches beyond instrumental messaging to make self-transcendence an ethical imperative. This ethical principle is not externally mandated, it inheres within language and the intersubjective communication process itself and it is operative within each theological sub-field prior to any external message/fruit. Just as with all knowing, authentic theology must engage all potential questions, and questions are asked by people. Any divisive meaning that avoids or shuts down the other self-defeats, so self-transcendence and relationality begin to appear next to the unrestricted notion of value as a second moral axis within one's horizon of feeling.

In the broadest ethical sense, divisive communication is not non-relational. Far from it. Instead messages that divide twist our ontological relationality into a pattern of dominance and submission where self is elevated over other until critics and prophets are *so other* that crushing them appears not only viable but just. Just ask Socrates, or St. Paul. The questions to ask them are not individualistic and cognitive, they are joint and social. What are we doing when we are communicating? Why is doing that communicating? What have we achieved when we do that? In Ephesians the answers to these questions are the prophetic gift of God's grace.

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.<sup>12</sup>

In Paul's tradition, when we are communicating authentically we are speaking the truth in love. Doing this is communicating because the other is engaged and integrated in the shared light of truth, and as this works we begin to achieve a divine level of unity that builds up the mystical body of Christ, together.

When rhetoric is severed from truth both communication and its subjects are debased as our sophistic power plays gradually self-defeat. This trend is internally given in the ontological priority of our intersubjectivity. Successful manipulation of one's *polis* results in community decisions out of alignment with reality, and when there are enough selfish power grabs the entire

culture is blown to dissolution by winds of deceit. In contrast, when God's grace is felt and communicated humanity builds itself up in organic unity. In Lonergan's system this ethical principle of unity/relationality is the "experience of unrestricted being-in-love," a second fundamental feeling providing a second key axis within our horizon. Accepting and aligning oneself with this axis marks moral and religious conversion, and together with the "unrestricted notion of value" provides a source of existential tension and a basis for objectivity in judgements of fact and value.<sup>13</sup>

### **Conclusion: Truth, Love, and Critiquing**

A liberal education is freeing to the degree that it opens up possibilities. Opening oneself to the possible introduces tension, stretching our horizons toward all questions and reaching for the good in all its dimensions. In teaching critical thinking, Lonergan shows how to enable cognitive self-appropriation and nurture the spirit of human inquiry. We want to know, and we do come to know via a cognitive process—questions and experiences raise tensions anticipating insight, motivating understanding, rendering judgement and yielding action. Not only do we have a fundamental need to know, as responsible subjects we also need to act, and this action is often speech, our contributions to shared social meaning.<sup>14</sup> Critical thinking generates critical discourse. Like Lonergan we live in an era of relativism, and like Socrates we live in a democracy, so too often our public sphere is a divisive cacophony of argumentative critiques where justice can be hard to discern. Who sets the norms and standards? From competitive advertising copy through rancorous presidential debates, cultural critics work daily to advance an overwhelming array of dialectics (identifying errors and naming distinctions), of rhetoric's (commending terms and policies), and ethics (guiding performances and assessing values achieved).

To provide an inherent objective standard for dialectic Lonergan's rock is the subject's unrestricted inquiry, and the experience of unrestricted being-in-love provides the standard for his Christian ethic. This essay advances the idea that communication achieves transcendence in shared meaning to the degree that it aligns with our two axes of feeling, manifesting both intellectual and moral/religious conversion. Communication's inherent ethical dynamic is intersubjective, so any critical rhetoric dividing humanity works against itself. This ethic inheres within the supra-personal quality of media in general and the noumenal quality of the Word in particular, so social critiques and especially religious reform rhetoric must strike a careful balance. Grace is universally offered so we all have access to truth and the experience of unrestricted being in love, and this means that others in error cannot be abandoned or rejected but must be embraced in faith and hope of change. This is the wisdom in St. Paul's teaching on "speaking the truth in love," and it is a major theme for Christian communication. Truth without love kills, love without truth abuses, and truth in love flourishes.

<sup>1</sup> *Ephesians* 4:14

<sup>2</sup> Lonergan, B., *Method in Theology*, (Herder and Herder: New York, 1972), pp. 19-20.

<sup>3</sup> Byrne, P., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan's Foundation for Ethics*, (University of Toronto Press: Toronto, 2016), pp. 39-41.

<sup>4</sup> Byrne, P., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan's Foundation for Ethics*, (University of Toronto Press: Toronto, 2016), pp. 225-226.

<sup>5</sup> Lonergan, B., *Method in Theology*, (Herder and Herder: New York, 1972), p. 5.

<sup>6</sup> Lonergan, B., *Method in Theology*, (Herder and Herder: New York, 1972), pp. 132-134.

<sup>7</sup> Plato. "Socrates' Defense (Apology)." *Plato: The Collected Dialogues*. (Princeton University Press: Princeton, 1961), p. 17 (30.e).

<sup>8</sup> Plato. "Phaedrus." *Plato: The Collected Dialogues*. (Princeton University Press: Princeton, 1961), p. 522 (277.a).

<sup>9</sup> Aristotle. *On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse*. (Oxford University Press: New York, 1991), p. 39 (1.2.7).

<sup>10</sup> Lonergan, B., *Method in Theology*, (Herder and Herder: New York, 1972), p. xi.

<sup>11</sup> Lonergan, B., *Method in Theology*, (Herder and Herder: New York, 1972), p. 357.

<sup>12</sup> *Ephesians* 3:11-16

<sup>13</sup> Byrne, P., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan's Foundation for Ethics*, (University of Toronto Press: Toronto, 2016), p. 210.

<sup>14</sup> Crowe, F., "Lonergan's Universalist View of Religion." *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* v. 12 (1994), pp. 165-168.

## **Discerning the Environment**

Judith Chelius Stark

By the most recent and credible scientific estimates, we human beings have about twelve years, more or less, to make the deep structural changes we need to address climate change. What, if anything, can the approach of Bernard Lonergan, that is, the ethics of discernment, contribute to this effort? In this essay, I will attempt to answer this question. This essay is structured in three sections: first, current and future challenges; second, the ethics of discernment in relation to the environment in general and to climate in particular; and third, a possible scenario and recommendations for future inquiry.

### **Current and Future Challenges**

Well over 97% of climate scientists support the view that the global climate is warming and that human activities, especially the burning of fossil fuels is the single-most contributing factor to the changes in climate.<sup>1</sup> Two recent reports are particularly relevant here: the most recent update from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the UN report warning of the loss of well over one million species around the globe unless we intervene in effective ways very soon.<sup>2</sup>

One of the fundamental principles of ecology is that everything on the planet is connected. Even more, the Gaia hypothesis offers the perspective that as a whole, not just in its individual life forms, is a living being. When James Lovelock first presented this view in the 1970s, it was largely dismissed, especially by scientists, as being too unsupported and “far out.” However, recently there is a newly awakened interest in the Gaia position, even among scientists. As David Grinspoon, an astrobiologist at the Planetary Science Institute, has remarked, “Life is not something that happened *on* Earth, but something that happened *to* Earth.”<sup>3</sup> Beyond scientists are the policymakers, environmentalists, and citizens who are becoming increasingly aware of the enormous ecological challenges we are facing in the short and long term. Not only are more people seeking accurate knowledge and information about the climate challenges, they are trying to find their way to policies and practices that can address these challenges.

### **The Ethics of Discernment**

In these tasks, the development and practice of the ethics of discernment can provide some excellent skills to help individuals and groups mitigate the looming issues before us. As Lonergan noted, our human enterprise is the “real apprehension of the human good in all its dimensions.”<sup>4</sup> What can be of greater human good than of preserving the integrity of the planet on which we humans and all living beings depend? What can the ethics of discernment contribute to this compelling enterprise? Enacting the process of discernment with its various

stages would be the first order of business. The process is rich with possibilities as it begins with experience in the real world (so long as we can decide on its main lineaments). Here we at least acknowledge the pseudo-debates about the science of climate change and rely upon the overwhelming agreement of climate scientists about the reality and severity of climate change happening now and looming before us. The barrage of media messages also needs to be mentioned which threaten to overwhelm our capacities to analyze and critically evaluate their claims. In the digital age with manipulated and false messages abounding, our role as educators is even more central to giving our students the critical thinking tools to navigate these stormy waters. After we structure our experience and put it into form to share with others, this leads to raising questions about the matter at hand. How can we formulate the most basic and foundational questions about climate change and its potential effects? We rely on the publicly and transparently scrutinized sources of knowledge to formulate our questions. These may include, what is the nature of climate change; what are its main drivers; what roles do humans play in these drivers; are either adaptation or mitigation (or both) possible as we ponder the current situation? At this point in the process, we move to insights in which correlations, findings, and conclusions may emerge. These lead to possible actions both in individual and collective spheres. Actions then generate further experiences and the process continues to build with modifications and new directions emerging.

### **A Scenario**

Let us put this process of discernment to work in a possible scenario: a non-profit group owns a valuable piece of residential property along the Jersey Shore. Over the past ten years, especially since Superstorm Sandy (2012), it has become increasingly obvious that, although for now it is a very desirable and valuable piece of real estate, the group is struggling to decide how and if it will dispose of this property. The group engages in the process of discernment over the course of many months, gathering its own group members, along with other local stakeholders, into the process. After difficult and contentious meetings and while using the paradigm of experience, questions, insight, actions, and further experience, the group decides to reject all commercial offers to sell the property. Instead of a commercial sale, the group decides to secure the property as much as possible using soft barriers (dune augmentation and native plantings) against future storm surges and sea level incursions. These actions are open to future evaluation and assessments as new experiences arise and give way to new questions, insights, and actions.

### **Recommendations**

As educators, we have serious obligations to give students the intellectual skills and moral principles to use in both their professional and personal lives. One of these skills is the method described in this essay that Father Bernard Lonergan put forward in his groundbreaking work, *Insight* (and many other writings). These skills can be applied across disciplines and professions since they include the elements of critical thinking, judgment, and an identification of the human good in all its manifestations. The ordering of these goods needs further scrutiny and must be the subject of vigorous debates. For example, the questions about what constitutes human flourishing and the ways that human flourishing is intricately tied to the flourishing of ecosystems

and to the planet itself need open and robust discussion. This is a deep, reflective process and like any method can be practiced and improved upon over time. How much time do we have? Right now.

<sup>1</sup> NASA, "Global Climate Change," <https://climate.nasa.gov/scientific-consensus/>

<sup>2</sup> IPCC, AR5, Synthesis Report, [https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/02/AR5\\_SYR\\_FINAL\\_SPM.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/02/AR5_SYR_FINAL_SPM.pdf) and Science and Policy for People and Nature, <https://www.ipbes.net/news/ipbes-global-assessment-summary-policy-makers-pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Grinspoon, David as quoted by Ferris Jabr, "The Earth is Just as Alive as You Are," *New York Times*, 20 April 2019.

<sup>4</sup> Notes from Patrick Byrne, Catholic Studies Seminar, May 29, 2019.



## The Discipline of Musical Performance and Values

Gloria J. Thurmond

The opportunity to participate in the 2019 Faculty Summer Seminar on “The Ethics of Discernment,” facilitated by Patrick Byrne, provided a focused, contemporary philosophical context within which thought and reflection on the discipline of musical performance as a university curriculum of study was made possible. Although university goals of musical performance may differ for the music student majoring in music performance and the music student not majoring or minoring in musical performance, the discipline of musical performance itself nevertheless requires the acquisition of a body of knowledge, a musical language, and a set of practical musical skills, all of which should be trained toward full integration and expression within the cognitive, affective, and physical domains. The degree to which full integration and expression is developed is, most often, the distinguishing feature between the student majoring in musical performance and the student who, though studying musical performance as a serious discipline, is not a music performance major.

According to the Vatican’s 1977 publication of a document entitled “The Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education,” the overarching goal of all curricular disciplines at a Catholic institution is “to seek to develop the whole person through intellectual inquiry and development, cultural engagement, and through the expansion and deepening of religious faith.”<sup>1</sup> Author and seminar facilitator Patrick Byrne supports this understanding of a Catholic education in his comments on the “Parameters of the Human Good.” He writes that,

[t]he good of a human life is the good of a developing whole of choices. [T]he value of a life is constituted by *what* values are chosen and *how* the choices are arrived at and in what sequence.”<sup>2</sup>

Further developed through his analysis of the idea of the “unrestricted notion of value” as posited by Bernard Lonergan, Byrne concluded that the “unrestricted notion of value” is experienced as “a feeling towards desiring answers about the good and are anticipatory of that which we are seeking.” This phenomenal feature of human consciousness belongs to that which Byrne refers to as “intentional responses.”

For the Catholic university, the music performance curriculum must require the discipline of consistent practice of technical musical skills, the building of a broad, musical repertoire that nourishes development toward the fulfillment of individual potential, the continual expansion and demonstration of musical literacy, and an understanding of the contextual cultural, historical, and stylistic background of the music being studied. For a Catholic university, the philosophical, aesthetic, and the spiritual values that inform and reflect virtue provide the obligatory ethical foundation upon which the aforementioned extrinsic musical and academic features must rest and from which they must be cultivated.

Since all music has the intrinsic ability to impact emotions and to elevate the human spirit, it becomes the task of the performer to choose the values that he/she wishes to express or

convey through performance. The observations recorded in ancient scriptures and philosophies affirm that music shapes individual character, reflects values, and that “as in music so in life,” present the reality that music also can have immoral and unethical effects. Dominican priest Basil Cole writes,

[Musical compositions] can have immediate or remote moral or immoral effects of themselves by force of the music, and they can impart implicit or explicit moral ideas by virtue of the lyrics. Moreover ... from the point of view of the person listening, there can be moral or immoral experiences depending upon the motives and manner in which the music is heard and the conduct which it encourages.

[While] music can bring people together, elevate the spirit to the realm of the divine, it also can be an instrument of corruption without necessarily being ugly. As a virtue, [music] is meant to stimulate profound questions concerning the meaning of human life and our response.<sup>3</sup>

*“Becoming Beholders,”* a collection of cross-disciplinary essays written by Catholic college and university professors published by Liturgical Press, explores the theme of cultivating sacramental imagination and actions in college classrooms. “The sacramental vision of Catholic higher education posits that God is made manifest in the study of all disciplines.”<sup>4</sup> The common theme that runs through each essay is, therefore, that of nourishing the students’ ability to find the transcendent in their studies.

From the collection of essays, “Practice Makes Reception: The Role of Contemplative Ritual in Approaching Art” by Joanna Ziegler makes the assertion that,

Through the curricular discipline of music performance, the music student experiences habitualized practice toward a foundation for mindfulness—or concentrated awareness. [Practice] provides direct access to works of art as genuine embodiments of the human spirit. The discipline and habit of concentrated awareness—or mindfulness—is at the heart of contemplative practice, is essential for the search for truth and spiritual living. Perseverance and steadfastness promise readiness—and only with readiness can the freedom to transcend the activity and journey to the utterly spectacular realm of creativity become reality.<sup>5</sup>

The 1999 “Letter to Artists” written by Pope John Paul II and dedicated “to all who are passionately dedicated to the search for new ‘epiphanies’ of beauty so that through their creative work as artists they may offer these as gifts to the world,”<sup>6</sup> affirms the close relationship between artistic discipline and spiritual living.

The more conscious [artists] are of the “gift,” [they] are led all the more to see themselves and the whole of creation with eyes able to contemplate and give thanks, and to raise to God a hymn of praise. This is the only way for them to come to a full understanding of themselves, their vocation and their mission. [Further,]

It is in living and acting that [human beings] establish their relationship with being, with the truth and with the good. The artist has a special relationship to beauty. In a very true sense it can be said that beauty is the vocation bestowed on [the artist] by the Creator in the gift of ‘artistic talent.’ Here we touch on an essential point. Those who perceive in themselves this kind of divine spark which is the artistic vocation—such as musician—feel at the same time the obligation not to waste this talent but to develop it, in order to put it at the service of their neighbor and of

humanity as a whole. There is therefore an ethic, even a spirituality of artistic service, which contributes in its way to the life and renewal of a people.<sup>7</sup>

The process of ethical discernment for the university music performance student ultimately will require a response that is a judgment in value. As an aspiring artist, the student will be challenged to respond to the categorical question of “what should I do” regarding their musical gift. The discipline of musical performance, when exercised consistently through musical and contemplative practice, allows the student to choose to reflect and express the beauty and goodness of God through the art of musical performance.

<sup>1</sup> Garrone, G., *The Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education*, ([www.vatican.va/archive](http://www.vatican.va/archive), 1977), #34, #35.

<sup>2</sup> Byrne, P., *The Ethics of Discernment*, (University of Toronto Press: Toronto, Buffalo, London, 2017), p. 313.

<sup>3</sup> Cole, B., *Music & Morals*, (Alba House: New York, 1998), pp. 132, 133.

<sup>4</sup> Eifler, K., and Landy, T., editors, *Becoming Beholders* (Liturgical Press: Collegeville, Minnesota, 2014), back cover.

<sup>5</sup> Ziegler, J., *Practice Makes Reception: The Role of Contemplative Ritual in Approaching Art*, *Becoming Beholders*, edited by Eifler and Landy, (Liturgical Press: Collegeville, Minnesota, 2014), pp. 53, 54.

<sup>6</sup> John Paul II, *Letter to Artists*, ([www.vatican.va/archive](http://www.vatican.va/archive), 1999), Introduction.

<sup>7</sup> John Paul II, *Letter to Artists*, ([www.vatican.va/archive](http://www.vatican.va/archive), 1999), #1, #3, #4.

## Ethics and Judgments of Value in Academic Libraries

Lisa Rose-Wiles

Phrases such as “the value of the library” and “return on investment” abound in the world of academic libraries, typically associated with attempts to increase or at least maintain funding. We use such strategies to cope with the expanding commercialization and demands for assessment in higher education ordained by those Bernard Lonergan calls the educationalists: the “group that has the power and the money, that runs the bureaucracy, that makes the decisions.”<sup>1</sup> As a result, library “value” is often calculated in dollar terms, or measured in terms of variables such as student retention or grades. The third “frame” of the *American College & Research Libraries Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education* is that “information has value (as a commodity, as a means of education, as a means to influence, and as a means of negotiating and understanding the world”).<sup>2</sup> While this sounds like more in the same economic vein, the associated “knowledge practices” include giving credit to “the original ideas of others through proper attribution and citation” and “understand[ing] how and why some individuals or groups ... may be underrepresented or systematically marginalized within the systems that produce and disseminate information.” These are ethical propositions that involve value judgements, particularly the observation that students should be encouraged to “examine their own information privilege.”

As a librarian and educator, I see the overarching value of teaching information literacy (a critical function of academic libraries) as promoting critical thinking and value judgements that lead to ethical choices and the greater good of society. The ACRL Framework defines information literacy as the set of integrated abilities encompassing the reflective discovery of information, the understanding of how information is produced and valued, and the use of information in creating new knowledge and participating ethically in communities of learning.

This focus on ethical participation in society resonates with Mark Miller’s explanation of value, the third level in Lonergan’s analysis of the human good, wherein “particular goods and the good of order are evaluated and criticized as more or less worthwhile based on a society’s values.”<sup>3</sup> By encouraging our students to engage not only in critical thinking but also discernment, which Patrick Byrne describes as “keen perception or judgement ... the process of identifying something of value”<sup>4</sup> we can help them become better members of a society that is sadly in need of redemption.

This is not to ignore the individual “particular goods” that our students need: finding and using information resources in order to complete assignments, pass their courses (hopefully with good grades) and ultimately graduate and find fulfilling employment through which to pay off their student debt. The latter is of enormous practical importance and a source of considerable stress for many of the students I see. Student debt is arguably the worst product of our consumerist society and the commercialization of higher education because it restricts the horizons of many students and educators (including librarians) to a preoccupation with grades

and the short-come utility of learning rather than larger goals of self-actualization and good citizenship. Lonergan notes that the fundamental problem in higher education today is the horizon of the educationalist, to which I would add the imposition of their financial-driven horizon on educators and students.

There is a dilemma here. As enlightened educators, we want to move beyond the current obsession with the financial bottom line, continual assessment of short-term “outcomes”, and the often deceptive “marketing” of ourselves and our institutions to our prospective consumers—students and their families. But like student debt, the need for a university (and its faculty employees) to remain solvent is always with us, or the whole enterprise collapses. The University Libraries are particularly vulnerable here because we do not “generate revenue” and tend to be seen as at best an essential service and at worse an unwarranted expense (I have heard high level administrators say “isn’t most of this information free on the internet?”). Nonetheless, I believe we do not further our cause by engaging in quantitative “return on investment” type pleas for our value. As Stefan Collini notes, the most important goals of a university [and its library] can’t be measured ... they need to be judged.”<sup>5</sup> Perhaps the most helpful way that we can help ourselves as well as society in the long run is by cultivating this habit of judgment—of discernment—in ourselves and our students, the population from which our future educators, educationalists and other society leaders is drawn. This is a challenge, particularly for those of us who do not teach full courses, but we can build on students’ own curiosity and desire to succeed by showing them the value of both information itself and a clear the research process. This is essentially what we try to do in our information literacy sessions, which are increasingly moving away from a simple “show and tell” how to access and use library databases and tools to more interactive, enquiry-based sessions grounded in critical pedagogy.

Patrick Byrne’s seminar “Ethics and Our Disciplines” helped me to frame the missing piece of our endeavors to both shape our future instruction program and help to broaden the horizons (or at least lessen the grip) of the educationalists by focusing on developing the discernment needed to recognize and make good value judgements. This aligns very well with our current direction and emphasis on critical thinking, simply expanding the term “critical” in order to orient it toward the ethical as well as the intellectual value. Since “processes of value reflection in general, and ethical reflection in particular, bear similarities to the process of reflection that occur within [Lonergan’s] cognitional structure”<sup>6</sup> and many of us are already using that structure (experiencing, understanding, judging, acting) in our teaching, this is surely something that we can reasonably work toward in our library.

<sup>1</sup>Lonergan, B. J. F., *Topics in Education: the Cincinnati Lectures of 1959 on the Philosophy of Education*, (R.M. Doran and F.E. Crowe (eds.) (University of Toronto Press: Toronto, 2015), p. 106.

<sup>2</sup>Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education. Retrieved July 1, 2019 from [http://www.ala.org/acrl/sites/ala.org/acrl/files/content/issues/infolit/Framework\\_ILHE.pdf](http://www.ala.org/acrl/sites/ala.org/acrl/files/content/issues/infolit/Framework_ILHE.pdf)

<sup>3</sup>Miller, M., *The Quest for God & the Good Life: Lonergan’s Theological Anthropology*, (Catholic University of America: Washington DC, 2013), p. 86.

<sup>4</sup>Byrne, P. H., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan's Foundation for Ethics*, (University of Toronto Press: Toronto, 2016), p. 14.

<sup>5</sup>Collini, S., *What are universities for?*, (Penguin: London, 2012), p. 138.

<sup>6</sup>Byrne, P. H., *The Ethics of Discernment: Lonergan's Foundation for Ethics*, (University of Toronto Press: Toronto, 2016), p. 105.

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October 2019